

## Message Text

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ACTION L-03

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ARA-16 EA-11 EUR-25 NEA-10 RSC-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-03 USIA-15 PRS-01

IO-13 ADP-00 PM-07 NSC-10 EB-11 CG-00 OIC-04 COA-02

H-03 ACDA-19 AEC-11 COME-00 DOTE-00 FMC-04 INT-08

TRSE-00 RSR-01 /199 W

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R 231900Z AUG 73

FM USMISSION GENEVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1356

INFO USMISSION USUN NY

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L GENEVA 4552

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, UN

SUBJ: STRAITS DISCUSSIONS WITH SOVIET DELEGATION 10 AUG

1. AT SOV REQUEST, AMB STEVENSON, MR. FRENCH AND RADM ROBERTSON MET WITH KOLESNIK (HEAD OF DELEGATION), BARABOLYA, AND BORIS KHABIROV (INTERPRETER) ON 10 AUGUST 1973 TO DISCUSS STRAITS.

2. STEVENSON STATED THAT SOVIET EFFORT ON NONSUSPENDABLE INNOCENT PASSAGE THROUGH STRAITS LEADING TO TERRITORIAL SEA OF FOREIGN STATE WAS CONSTRUCTIVE EFFORT TO SEPARATE MIDDLE EAST QUESTION FROM LOS DISCUSSIONS. HE POINTED OUT THAT, AS SOVIETS ALREADY KNEW, THIS WAS DELICATE MATTER FOR USG, AND THAT IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO US TO KNOW IF ARAB STATES WOULD BE WILLING TO ACCEPT SUBMERGED TRANSIT AND OVERFLIGHT OF MILITARY  
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AIRCRAFT IF WE COULD ACCEPT SOVIET FORMULATION.

3. KOLESNIK RESPONDED BY SAYING THAT SOVIET DELEGATION HAD DECIDED THAT THEY WERE NOT GOING TO MAKE ANY CHANGES TO THEIR STRAITS PROPOSAL THIS SESSION BECAUSE THEY SAW NO MOVEMENT ON OTHER SIDE. WHILE THEY RECOGNIZED THAT AMENDMENTS MIGHT HELP IN REACHING A BROADER-BASED AGREEMENT, THEY HAD DETERMINED THAT IT WAS PREMATURE TO MAKE ANY SUCH AMENDMENTS NOW. HE ADDED THEY HAD SHOWN TEXT WE HAD PREVIOUSLY SEEN TO THE ARAB DELEGATIONS. THESE DELEGATIONS AGREED THAT IT WAS AN IMPORTANT INITIATIVE AND STATED THEY WOULD FORWARD IT TO THEIR GOVERNMENTS. AS YET THEY HAD NOT REPLIED TO HIM. HE STATED THAT EGYPTIANS WERE THE TOUGHEST, BUT THAT THEY HAD WORKED MORE WITH THE EGYPTIANS THAN THE OTHERS. HE WOUND UP BY ASKING IF THEY COULD TRANSMIT THE DRAFT REFLECTING OUR SUGGESTED AMENDMENTS TO THE ARAB DELEGATIONS.

4. STEVENSON RESPONDED BY MAKING CLEAR THAT OUR WORKING-LEVEL DISCUSSIONS WITH MR. BARABOLYA ON WORDING OF SOVIET DRAFT AMENDMENTS DID NOT CONSTITUTE CONCURRENCE IN THEM. THE CHANGES WE HAD SUGGESTED WERE TECHNICAL ONLY; WE WERE NOT PREPARED TO SUPPORT THESE TEXTS.

5. AFTER ACKNOWLEDGING FOREGOING, KOLESNIK STATED THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO ADVISE ARABS THAT THEIR PROPOSAL WILL BE INTRODUCED IN THE FUTURE WITH CONSENT OF U.S. DELEGATION. MR. STEVENSON REITERATED THAT THIS WAS NOT CORRECT, THAT WE WERE ONLY CONSIDERING THE PROPOSAL. KOLESNIK STATED THAT ARABS WANTED TO KNOW U.S. REACTION BEFORE THEY COMMITTED THEMSELVES AND MIGHT DELAY THEIR REACTIONS UNTIL THEY HAD U.S. RESPONSE. HE THEN ASKED IF HE COULD TELL ARABS THAT THEY (USSR) WERE DISCUSSING PROPOSAL WITH U.S. DELEGATION. STEVENSON STATED THAT THEY COULD INFORM THE ARABS THAT WE WERE CONSIDERING THE PROPOSAL.

6. KOLESNIK THEN SOUGHT U.S. POSITION ON ITALIAN STRAITS PROPOSAL. STEVENSON RESPONDED THAT HE THOUGHT IT WAS TOO NARROWLY DRAWN TO GAIN VERY WIDE ACCEPTANCE AND THEN INQUIRED OF KOLESNIK AS TO THE SOVIET REACTION TO A GENERAL LESS-THAN-SIX-MILE EXCEPTION. KOLESNIK INDICATED UNACCEPTABILITY OF THIS TYPE OF EXCEPTION TO USSR AND STATED THAT IT WAS PROBLEM NOT MERELY CONFINED TO CONFIDENTIAL

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AEGEAN SEA. HE STATED THAT AN EXCEPTION FOR STRAITS OF NARROWER BREADTH (E.G., 3 MILES) MIGHT BE ALL RIGHT, BUT 6 MILES WAS COMPLETELY UNACCEPTABLE.

7. DISCUSSION THEN TURNED TO OTHER ASPECTS OF SOVIETS' STRAITS POSITION AND PROPOSALS, ON WHICH KOLESNIK EXPRESSED FOLLOWING POSITIONS:

A. SUPERTANKER SUGGESTION WAS MADE IN ATTEMPT TO MEET PROBLEMS OF CO-SPONSORS OF STRAITS STATES' PROPOSAL, PRIMARILY WITH MALACCA STRAITS IN MIND.

B. SOVIETS HAD HAD SOME DISCUSSIONS WITH JAPANESE DELEGATION ON STRAITS. BASED ON THESE DISCUSSIONS, THEY EXPECT DIFFICULTIES WITH JAPANESE POSITIONS. THEY EXPECT JAPANESE TO OPPOSE FREE TRANSIT OF SHIPS WITH NUCLEAR PROPULSION OR NUCLEAR MATERIAL ON BOARD. HE STATED THAT JAPANESE DELEGATION HAD NO DISCRETION TO MOVE WHILE IN GENEVA. HE INDICATED THAT SOVS MUST THINK OVER CAREFULLY HOW TO HANDLE JAPANESE AT CONF; OTHERWISE THEY WOULD OPPOSE OUR POSITION THERE, WHICH WOULD BE VERY DAMAGING.

C. OVERFLIGHT. SOVS AT FIRST EXPRESSED VIEW THAT THIS WOULD BE MOST DIFFICULT PART OF FREE TRANSIT PROPOSAL TO GET. WHEN WE EXPRESSED OPINION THAT WE SAW SUBMERGED TRANSIT AS EQUALLY DIFFICULT, THE SOVIETS ADMITTED THAT THEY WERE OF EQUAL DIFFICULTY BUT OVERFLIGHT DID NOT MEAN AS MUCH TO THEM.

D. KOLESNIK INDICATED THAT BARABOLYA HAD READ IN INDONESIAN NEWSPAPERS THAT U.S. GAVE ADVANCE NOTIFICATION TO INDONESIAN GOVERNMENT OF OUR INTENTION TO SEND WARSHIPS THROUGH THEIR ARCHIPELAGIC WATER. HE STATED THAT THEY HAD SUBSEQUENTLY CONFIRMED THIS TO BE THE CASE. HE DID NOT SAY HOW OR WITH WHOM HE HAD CONFIRMED THIS. WE NEITHER CONFIRMED NOR DENIED.

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